NCA
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JIM MILLER/JAKARTA

INDONESIA POLITICS

ANNCR:

AS INDONESIA, THE WORLD'S FIFTH LARGEST NATION PREPARES TO NAME PRESIDENT SUHARTO TO A THIRD FIVE YEAR TERM, THE COMPLEX CHARACTER OF THE NATIONS POLITICAL STRUCTURE BECOMES MORE APPARENT. JIM MILLER HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT FROM JAKARTA.

VOICE:

SINCE INDONESIA DECLARED ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM THE NETHERLANDS AT THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO, IT HAS HAD ONLY TWO PRESIDENTS -- THE LATE MISTER SUKARNO AND THE INCUMBENT MISTER SUHARTO, WHO IS CERTAIN TO BE NAMED TO A NEW TERM BY THE CURRENT SESSION OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS.

THE INDONESIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM IS LAYERED WITH A HOST OF ELEMENTS -- WHICH INCLUDE RELIGION, REGIONALISM, CULTURAL TRADITION AND THE MILITARY. THE MAJORITY OF INDONESIANS ARE MOSLEMS. OTHER RELIGIONS INCLUDE HINDUISM, BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY. THEN THERE ARE THE SO-CALLED MYSTICAL FAITHS.

THESE MYSTICAL SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT ARE OF CONCERN TO MOSLEMS, ESPECIALLY THE ISLAMIC-ORIENTED UNITED DEVELOPMENT PARTY. ITS MEMBERS NOTE THAT CURRENT STATE POLICY MENTIONS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CITIZENS TO PRACTICE THEIR RELIGION AND BELIEFS. THE PARTY SAYS THE TERM, BELIEFS, CAN BE INTERPRETED AS AN EFFORT TO EXTEND OFFICIAL STATUS TO MYSTICISM. MYSTICS OFTEN PRACTICE A COMBINATION OF THEIR OWN FAITH AND ISLAM. AND MYSTICAL SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED AS A WAY OF LIFE BY MANY PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY ON THE ISLAND OF JAVA. THE CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE OF MYSTICISM AND ITS STATUS IN THE STRUCTURE COULD RESULT IN DIMINISHED SUPPORT OF MISTER SUHARTO BY THE ISLAMIC PARTY. ALTHOUGH HE DOESN'T NEED ITS SUPPORT FOR RE-ELECTION.

THE MILITARY HAS PLAYED A CONSISTENTLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN INDONESIAN POLITICS. PRESIDENT SUHARTO IS A RETIRED GENERAL AND HIS GOVERNMENT IS MILITARILY BACKED. THE NINE HUNDRED TWENTY MEMBER CONGRESS HAS IN ITS RANKS, ONE HUNDRED SIXTY FIVE MILITARY OFFICERS WITH THE RANK OF GENERAL, PLUS OTHERS OF LOWER RANK.

THE CONGRESS IS A COMPLEX ORGANIZATION. FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY MEMBERS FORM THE PARLIAMENT, OF WHICH THREE HUNDRED SIXTY ARE ELECTED. ANOTHER FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY MEMBERS COMPLETE THE CONGRESS, OF WHOM ONE HUNDRED THIRTY FIVE ARE CHOSEN BY REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES, ONE HUNDRED FIFTY FIVE FROM THE ARMED FORCES, FIFTY TWO NON-ARMED FORCES DEPUTIES, AND ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN POLITICAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES CHOSEN IN PROPORTION TO THE SEATS WON IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

THE DOMINANT POLITICAL GROUPING IS GOLKAR, WHICH SUPPORTS PRESIDENT SUHARTO AND HAS MILITARY BACKING. GOLKAR WON SIXTY TWO PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL VOTE IN NINETEEN SEVENTY SEVEN TO HOLD TWO HUNDRED THIRTY TWO TO THF THREE HUNDRED SIXTY ELECTED SEATS. THE ISLAMIC UNITED DEVELOPMENT PARTY IS SECOND WITH NINETY NINE SEATS.

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